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ABSTRACT

School Without Walls provides students with an opportunity to test theory (textbook learning) with practice (community resources), and from practice formulate new understandings. A student enrolled in a course discusses with his subject teachers the resource he wishes to use as he masters subject content. The school provides opportunities for independent study, allows students to select their courses and arrange their schedules, conducts two-and-one-half-hour classes twice a week, and uses various teaching methods. Examples are given of student programs, community resources, and sample minicourses. (Author/MLF)

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SCHOOL WITHOUT WALLS

ANTOINETTE J. CORPREW, Principal

When the history of education in the District of Columbia Public Schools in the seventies is evaluated, of paramount importance will be - What options were made available to the student of talent and creativity who may have terminated his high school education, were not the options of involvements in learning and living presented to him? Therefore, in March, 1971 an untraditional school was created - an educational venture carried on in relevant centers of research and learning in the federal city - a school that gives autonomy to youth as they study people, history, environment, and social problems-by actually mingling with them; in short, a SCHOOL WITHOUT WALLS.

SCHOOL WITHOUT WALLS' 156 students constitute what is, perhaps, the most progressive student body in the District of Columbia School System. Indicative of America's melting pot, the student body is diverse in its composition. Racially, the urban students are 2/3 black and 1/3 white, being guidded by a staff of nine certified teachers, 1 counselor, and a principal; with many other teachers in the Washington community. Here the students are tall and short; rich and poor; bright and not so bright. However, all connected with the school complex are dedicated to the premise that LEARNING CAN BE AND SHOULD BE A PLEASURABLE EXPERIENCE.

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LET'S BEGIN WITH WHAT THE SCHOOL WITHOUT WALLS IS NOT: an elite school for only bright students with top grades; a remedial school for slow learners with flunking grades; a special school for problem students; a private school supported by public funds; a school solely for college-bound students; a school for bench-warmers who think they can pass while "goffin' off"; a school for every student in the District of Columbia, nor a school for drop-outs.

NOW, THEN, WHAT IS THE SCHOOL WITHOUT WALLS? It is a free, public citywide school, located in an obsolete school building, in which students have strong learning motivations; desire to work independently; have mastered basic skills; get along with people and respect their opinions; seek learning experiences other than in textbooks; recognize "city as classroom" as a rich learning resource; want individualized instruction, and accept responsibility for their own education. Of course, SCHOOL WITHOUT WALLS doesn't work for everyone. Before attending our school one should have mastered the basic skills, for the school's major thrust is to ENRICH THE STUDENT'S LEARNING EXPERIENCE THROUGH THE UTILIZATION OF COMMUNITY RESOURCES.

IN SOME WAYS SCHOOL WITHOUT WALLS IS LIKE OTHER SCHOOLS: requires 17½ Carnegie Units for graduation; allows students to choose college preparatory courses and general education courses. However, once a student has enrolled in a course such as history, government, humanities, or science, it is he who discusses with his subject teachers the resource he wishes to use as he masters subject content.

Consider the following examples: in the fall semester three members of the National Organization of Black Scientists began to teach our chemistry students (They are given release time by their agencies

and use their lunch hour). As of the second semester, all twenty-one of the chemistry pupils have been placed in laboratories throughout the city. At Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, Food and Drug Administration, Howard University Hospital, and at National Institutes of Health, pupils spend one day a week working alongside researchers who have been assigned as their mentors on a one-to-one basis. A documentary on SCHOOL WITHOUT WALLS students at their Walter Reed site is currently being prepared for Army Research and Development Journal. Similarly, the science experience enjoyed by our students has already appeared in the Walter Reed post newspaper.

Fain Jackson is a seventeen-year old junior. His government resource has taken him to Reynolds, Mundy and Anderson law firm where he has been doing action research on our judicial system. Several times Fain has flown to New York (with his own expense account) to conduct business for the company. Jackson has been given the opportunity to attach himself to any member of the firm who is working on a case that interests him. Three other students are learning government from three judges in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. There they sit with the judge when he presides, and learn about our court system. Another student acts as law clerk to his father, an attorney.

Several students have taken Sign Language at Gallaudet College. After they complete the course, they, then, act as helping teachers to the younger children. For humanities credit, the students also serve practicums in such places as Wild Life Federation, Smithsonian Institution, Visitor's Bureau, Close-Up, etc.

SCHOOL WITHOUT WALLS students have established national, as well as international acclaim. One of our students won a week-long trip to Paris last summer for her prize-winning Bicentennial design which appears on all placemats and napkins which are being used by Air France during America's Bicentennial year. Another SCHOOL WITHOUT WALLS student, Hinton Battle, was featured in Don't Bother Me I Can't Cope and is currently appearing in the broadway play, The Wiz, in which he plays the Scarecrow. Two other plays using SCHOOL WITHOUT WALLS students were the D.C. casts of Diamond Jim and Treemonisha. Last fall one of our pupils had a starring role in the Federal City College's production Windows. Jennifer Prease Price, a national model is also a graduate of our school. In fact, she began her modeling career while she was a student here. School Without Walls could not realize its thrust without the cooperation of the city of Washington. Listed at the end of this paper are the many agencies which help our school to provide quality experiences to its students.

Other similatities with regular high schools are School Without Walls teachers have full certification by the Board of Education. However, in our school the nine teachers are required to teach regular courses, develop community resources, and coordinate outside experiences so that pupils are assured of obtaining a quality education. Like other schools our pupils are encouraged to acquire a college education. Of the fifty-seven students graduated in June, 90 per cent of them are currently enrolled in college and have been able to receive either scholarships or financial aid of some degree.

Proudly, however, SCHOOL WITHOUT WALLS does differ from most high schools: has a school building as a base of operations with students

attending classes all over the city learning from their SCHOOL WITHOUT WALLS teachers, as well as with practitioners in the field. You'll see our students in other public and private schools, on college campuses, in museums, churches, theatres, business establishments, and government buildings. This means that School Without Walls students must enjoy traveling. Our school provides opportunities for independent study; allows students to select their courses and arrange their schedules; conducts 2½ hour classes twice a week, not 50-minute periods five times a week; permits students to design their own learning mode, and uses various teaching methods: Classes are taught by School Without Walls teachers; classes are taught by students; classes are taught cooperatively by community workers and by School Without Walls staff; in addition, new courses are offered each advisory; each yields ¼ Carnegie unit.

What does one gain by attending the School Without Walls? Attending our school means becoming a different kind of student-one with character and a sense of responsibility who can perform without someone's looking over his shoulder. This, in turn, means getting a different kind of education - one that is both broadening and related to life and community.

HOW DO YOU GET IN? Enrollment in School Without Walls is limited to 150 students. A person must have completed the ninth grade and must apply to the school. He is scheduled for an interview by a panel which consists of the principal, one teacher, and three students. The applicant's parents should accompany him to the interview. Decision to accept or reject the pupil is mailed to his home and to his school counselor. Grades are not requested until after an applicant is accepted.

Once a student is accepted, he develops with each of his teachers a Learning Plan which reflects his mode of learning. OUR TEACHERS ALWAYS STAND READY TO ASSIST PUPILS. Even the most unusual learning plan is acceptable at SCHOOL WITHOUT WALLS as long as it provides quality education.

HOW DOES ONE GET OUT? He is graduated; he decides SCHOOL WITHOUT WALLS doesn't meet his needs and asks to be transferred to his neighborhood school; he begins "goofin' off" and tampering with the education of others, then we ask him to leave; he proves unable to adjust to the School Without Walls' philosophy, then the staff requires him to leave at the end of the semester.

HOW DOES THE FUTURE LOOK FOR SCHOOL WITHOUT WALLS? Our faculty is developing viable options for expanding our alternative educational program which will service far more students than we now do.

We are planning to add a Community Resource Learning Center to our School Without Walls Program which will provide other high school pupils with opportunities to experience imaginative and extensive resources while enrolled in their present high schools (PUPILS WILL BE INVOLVED IN SCHOOL WITHOUT WALLS RESOURCE PROJECTS ONLY, not losing identity of their local high schools). Beginning the present semester we have already begun a pilot program with servicing another local high school by providing science experiences for thirty of its students in the Department of Oncology at Howard University Hospital. There pupils are interning in Radio Therapy; Endocrinology, Microbiology, and Zoology. If the pilot proves suc-

cessful, our school will provide similar experiences to city-wide high school seniors while they remain in their local schools next year.

Within three years SCHOOL WITHOUT WALLS would like to become a Community Resource Learning Center with a total transient population, providing services for students nearing completion of their high school requirements; servicing other high schools in making use of the city of Washington with its many resources by suggesting learning sites to them, and recommending community consultants to secondary teachers who wish to enrich their curricular offerings.

Succinctly, it is the philosophy of the School Without Walls that the goal of education would be to provide students with an opportunity to test theory (textbook learning) with practice(community resources), and, from practice, to formulate new understandings.

Likewise, we dedicate ourselves to developing the potential of each enrollee by providing diverse instructional programs for him so that he will be challenged to achieve excellence as he pursues his field of interest.

School Without Walls

Community Resources

TARGET POPULATION

COMMUNITY AS CLASSROOM

In the following are listed community agencies which provide invaluable assistance in supplying learning stations for our pupils:

I. ART

Murch Elementary School
Federal City College
Smithsonian Associates
Lemuel Penn Center
Station WHUR..Howard Univ.
National Gallery of Art
Corcoran Gallery of Art
Banneker Community Center
Woodward & Lothrop
Anacostia High School
Smithsonian Institution
Arts & Industry Building
History & Technology
National Collection of Fine Arts
Washington Saturday College

II. FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Catholic University of America
Mrs. Sarnoff, Chairman Diplomatic Committee
Alliance Francaise
French Nursery
St. John's Catholic Church
Bicentennial Commission
Adams-Morgan Food Co-Op
Institute for Polyculturalism and Multilingualism
Howard University
Georgetown University Foundations of Education
Ambassador & Mrs. Abdalluh Mauritania Embassy
French Market
Spanish Education Center
Senior Citizens Group of Spanish Speaking Members
Eaton School
Washington Saturday College

III. HUMANITIES

Area B - Mental Health Center
Museum of African Art
National Portrait Gallery
Hirshorn Museum
Planned Parenthood Clinic
Smithsonian Institution
Discovery Room
Anthropology Section
WHUR Radio Station, Howard Univ.
Washington Office, State of Illinois
Folger Shakespeare Theatre Group
Lightship Chesapeake
John Day Law Office
Martin Luther King, Jr. Library
Ford's Theatre
Circle Theatre
Young, Gifted and Black
Columnist Carl Rowan
Paul Jr. High School
National Archives Theatre
National Gallery of Art
National Science Foundation
National Collection of Fine Arts
Federal City College
Washington Technical Institute
Camp Lett
Penn Center, D.C. Public Schools
National Wildlife Foundation
Wildlife Federation
WOL Radio Station
Afro-American
D.C. Black Repertory Theatre
Common Cause
National Press Building
Capitol Spotlight
Arena Stage
Biograph Theatre
Western School of the Arts
Kalorama Pupil Personnel Center
Sharpe Health School

IV. SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS

Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Algebra, Geometry, & Trigonometr

National Institute of Health
Areospace Museum
Lightship Chesapeake
Washington Saturday College
Ecological Services
Environmental Sciences
N.E. Georgetown Univ. Community Health Plan, Inc.
Walter Reed Hospital
V.D. Hotline
Food and Drug Administration
Black Scientist of D.C. (Civic Organization)
Howard Univ. College of Medicine
Federal City College
Berliner Animal Hospital
Department of Transportation
Cancer Detection Clinic, Howard University
National Zoological Park
Dept. of Interior...National Park Service
Stanton Elementary School
Camp Lett
Rock Creek Park Nature Center
D.C. Heart Association
Washington Technical Institut
National Arboretum
National Aquarium

V. CAREER EXPLORATION AND SOCIAL STUDIES

WOL Radio Station
Gov. Daniel Walker's Office State of Illinois
Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm's Office
National Geographic Society
Automobile Owners Action Council
Urban Studies-Howard Univ.
D.C. Public Schools(NYC)
Law Offices of Days, Walthan Jones and Goldberg
U.S. Court System
WHUR Radio Station, Howard Ur
Berliner Animal Hospital
National Tenants Organizatior
Ford's Theatre
WMAL Radio Station
Movement for Economic Justice
Washington Technical Institut Radio Station
Safeway
Catholic University of Americ
Adams-Morgan Women's Employment Center

Kalorama Pupil Personnel Center
WOL
Dept. of Human Resources
Dept. of Army
Washington Hospital Center
Common Cause
Close-Up
National Portrait Gallery
African Art Museum
N.O.W.
Federal Aviation Administration
Public Citizens Information Center
Reynolds, Mundy and Anderson
Councilman Spaulding's Office
Howard Univ.-History Dept.
Back Alley Theatre
Georgetown Law School
D.C. Management Association
Gino's
Hot Shoppes
McDonalds

VI. MUSIC

First Congregational United Church of Christ
Federal City College
Western School of the Arts
Gordon Jr. High School
Martin Luther King, Jr. Library
Sewell's Music Conservatory
Concert halls throughout the city

SAMPLE MINICOURSES

Minicourses are based upon the interests of pupils. Such courses may have only a few participants; others may have as many as thirty-five. Some of the above courses may be taught by a School Without Walls teacher; some by a School Without Walls student, and others may be taught by community people in their places of employment.

If a student seeks credit for a minicourse, he prepares a Learning Plan with each of his teachers so that there is adequate follow-up. By permitting pupils to avail themselves to various learning alternatives, School Without Walls increases greater freedom of choice for students and increases interpenetration between the school and the community.

ART

Design Fundamentals.....Federal City College
Sewing.....Western School of the Arts
The Art of Drawing.....Smithsonian Young Associates
Draw/Design.....Saturday College(D.C. Teachers College)

Practicum in Art.....Murch Elementary School
Modeling.....Banneker Recreation Center
Leather Craft.....Leather Goods and Crafts, Inc.
Photography.....Smithsonian Young Associates and School Without Walls

INTERDISCIPLINARY COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Office Management.....School Without Walls
Insurance.....Equitable Life Assurance
Budgets, Who needs one?.....Business Specialists
Accounting.....Staff of SBA and SCORE
Federal Taxes.....Internal Revenue Service Tax Office
The Market.....Offices of Bache & Company, Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith

Jobs! How To Get One & Keep It.....Placement Staff
Consumer Education.....Public Citizen Visitor's Center
Survival Skills.....Consultants and School Without Walls Staff

HISTORY

The Struggle of the A American Woman.....Instructor and Student Staff
Street Law.....Georgetown University Law Students
Harlem Renaissance.....Instructor and Staff Humanities Dept.

HISTORY (cont'd)

"You are there"-
A Court Experience.....Legal Staff, Superior Court of the District of Columbia and local lawyers

Project City.....Close-Up Staff

Civil Rights Movement.....School Without Walls city resources

Bicentennial Projects.....School Without Walls & outside resources

"I'm An American, too"
"The Dye Is Now Cast".....National Portrait Gallery

Lobbying.....Common Cause

The Black Family.....Instructor and Community

The 20th Century.....Consultants

Architecture.....Consultants

HUMANITIES

Research Internship.....National Wildlife Federation

Docent(tour leader).....Smithsonian Institution

Anthropology.....Smithsonian Institution

Music.....Federal City College or Western School of the Arts

Journalism.....School Without Walls Newspaper Capital Spotlight; Afro American Newspaper; Johnson Publications (Jet Magazine,) etc.

Art History.....School Without Walls, city, and Washington museums

Writers' Workshop.....Student Instructor

Drama.....Back Alley Theatre and D.C. Dept of Recreation; Univ. of Md. student

Vocabulary.....School Without Walls

Comparative Religion.....Washington D.C. Staff of Theologians

Business English.....School Without Walls Staff

Internship in Education Dept.....National Collection of Fine Arts

"Clinical Studies in Personality & Behavior.....Area B Mental Health Clinic

Counselor Intern Program.....Camp Lett

Advanced Humanities.....School Without Walls & Resources

Debating.....George Washington University

Nutrition: You are What You Eat.....Washington Technical Institute; Center for Science in the Public Interest; Ralph Nader's Affiliates; Giant & Safeway Stores; National Institutes of Health

Human Sexuality and Reproduction	Planned Parenthood coordinators; School Without Walls Biology teachers Geneticists from Howard Univ. Representatives of NOW and Right to Life; Rape Crisis Center
Psychology: Personal Development and Self-awareness	Pupil Personnel Center
Communications: Video Taping	Chevy Chase Community Center Lightship Chesapeake Federal City College
American Studies	School Without Walls and City of D.C.
Aesthetic Expression: The Dance	Federal City College
Music Theory	Federal City College
Library Science and Research	Federal City College Youth Alternatives Program National Wildlife Foundation
Early Childhood Behavior and Education	The Learning Center Owl Day School
Communications: Radio	Radio Station WOL
Special Education: Speech Therapy	Various elementary & junior high schools Various Pupil Personnel Centers

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Beginning Spanish & Beginning French	Visitors Bureau Howard University
Advanced Spanish & Advanced French	School Without Walls

ADVANCED MATH

Compiling Statistics	Department of Transportation

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Tumbling	Federal City College
Karate	Federal City College
The Dance	Federal City College
Gymnastics	Federal City College
Swimming	Federal City College
Baseball	Federal City College
Softball	Federal City College
Basketball	Federal City College
Wrestling	Federal City College
Ice Skating	Sculpture Garden

COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE

Coping with SAT, PSAT, and NEDT(Workshop)	Educational Testing Service Staff
Study Skills	Director of Right to Read Program
Study Skills, for the Library	Librarian Supervisor, D.C. Public Schools
Should Marijauna be Legalized?	Student Debate
Drugs and Narcotics	Film and drug mobile Health Services, D.C. Public Schools
College Day	Area College Admissions Officer
Veneral Diseases	Health Services, D.C. Public Schools
Test Preparation Skills	Federal City College Counseling Staff and Staff member from Testing Department of D.C. Public Schools
Family Life Education	Health Services, D.C. Public Schools
Local Summer Employment (Workshop)	Manpower Counselor, Western High School
Visiting Area Colleges	School Without Walls Counselor
Visits to C & P Telephone Co., Univac, & other selected Industries	Industry Staff Members

SCIENCE

Basic Ichthyology	National Aquarium
Indoor Botany	The Third Day Plant Coop, Dupont Circle
Biological Themes & Concepts	Museum of Natural History
Cell Biology	School Without Walls
Zoological Topics	National History Museum Zoo Aquarium
Botany	Museum of Natural History National Botanical Gardens National Arboretum Rock Creek Park
Human Biology	Sharpe Health Center
Aquatic Biology	Lightship Chesapeake

Human Biology.....Various Resources
Introduction to Wildlife Management.....Washington Technical Institute
Introduction to Horticulture.....Washington Technical Institute
V.D. Hotline.....V.D. Hotline 6115 Chillum Street, N.E.
Edible Wild Plants.....Federal City College
Urban Botany.....Haines Point Research Statio
Introduction to Forest Management.....Washington Technical Institute
Introduction to Food Science.....Washington Technical Institute
Noise Pollution.....Dept. of Natural Resources
Urban Geology.....Washington Technical Institute
Physics I, II, III.....Washington Technical Institute
Air Pollution.....Air Monitoring Station
Physics in Space.....Goddard Space Center
Oncology.....Howard University Hospital
Microbiology.....Howard University Hospital
Radio Therapy.....Howard University Hospital
Endocrinology.....Howard University Hospital
Advanced Biology and Chemistry I.....National Organization of Black Scientists
Aquatic Chemistry.....Lightship Chesapeake
Drug Chemistry.....Food and Drug Administration
Hematology.....Walter Reed Army Institute of Research
Nephrology.....Walter Reed Army Institute of Research
Endocrinology and Metabolism.....Walter Reed Army Institute of Research
Biochemistry.....Walter Reed Army Institute of Research
Experimental Chemistry.....Walter Reed Army Institute of Research
Virology.....Walter Reed Army Institute of Research
Toxicology.....National Institutes of Health
Virology.....National Institutes of Health